

Bedford Bulletin

Columbus Street church of Christ

512 Columbus Street Bedford, Ohio 44146

----- Building Phone: 440-232-2231 -----

Website: www.bedfordcoc.com

E-Mail: dave.evangelistcoc@gmail.com

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**“GOD
Made us
Alive...”**

**Together
with Christ**

Ephesians 2:5

Posting Signs

There has been a lot in the news lately about riots and the aftermath to homes, businesses and communities that necessarily results in vandalism and destruction to property. These movements care little about the individuals they hurt and are non-selective when it comes to violence and destruction. They bulk anyone or anything in their path as targets. Like a tsunami destroys everything in its path, so does an angry mob.

What is interesting is that many businesses and private individuals have posted signs of solidarity and yet still fall victim to the wave of terror. It is as though the mob can't read, which is not likely. More likely are these two points: 1) Signs have no power against the power of the mob since they are inanimate objects. 2) The sign is meaningless to the mob that acts without fear against the message of the sign because no consequence apparently exists for their actions.

We have a sign posted on the building and on the front lawn, “Church of Christ”. The mob would be all who oppose the teaching of Christ and would attack, not caring at all about the message, or the people who put the sign there in the first place. This could be groups of anything from atheists, to protestant church leaders, from the young people who have been mis taught about the things of God and have become unwilling and in some cases, unable, to hear truth. It can also be the very members within who have become laxed spiritually and have forgotten the words on the sign, “Church of Christ” represent a battle between good and evil won by Jesus Christ, *“declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead”* (Rom. 1:4). The same name Christian is worn by every member of the church, and distinguishes them from every other name, and sets them apart for the work. Jeremiah chapter 6 speaks to such a people who have a name, “Judah”, and like many Christians today, have forgotten the powerful victories, and battles for truth fought by those who were before them, who stood up, even gave their lives for that very name. In verse 1 he wrote warning of their impending destruction from the north, *“O you children of Benjamin, gather yourselves to flee from the midst of Jerusalem! Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a signal-fire in Beth Haccerem; For disaster appears out of the north, and great destruction”* (Jer. 6:1). They did not heed the warning, nor did they set a “signal fire” as a sign but like men today they ignored the Lord who said, *“Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it’”* (v.16). In the seventh chapter the word of the Lord speaks to the judgment that will come on “deaf religion”. *“So you shall say to them, ‘This is a nation that does not obey the voice of the Lord their God nor receive correction. Truth has perished and has been cut off from their mouth’* (7:28). Thus, the sign, “Church of Christ” shall be powerless, only if, the people within are deaf and do not obey the voice of the Lord. Many have let go of *“old paths, where the good way is”*, uncircumcising their own hearts and the end is always the same, and empty building.

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

Don't get me wrong, the "Church of Christ" will never be powerless or meaningless. It is the individual members of "Church of Christ", who became meaningless because they do not walk in the good way. There, the mob acts with impunity without fear against the precepts of the sign because weapons of war, the word of God, have been laid down.

One problem is "resting". Not rest which results from your labor, that is good rest, but many rest from the labor itself, unwittingly becoming slaves to empty lives, randomness, lack of focus, and purpose. Then the sign "Church of Christ" or the name "Christian" becomes ornamental, carrying no power, authority, meaningless, just an emblem representing something that once was. Once a people with answers, with knowledge of spiritual matters, a people who carried the "Sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17), spreaders of the good news of Jesus Christ, and the power of His blood. This is most notably seen in churches that have lost their zeal for the lost, zeal for the knowledge and zeal for the goal—that home in Heaven.

This is nothing new, it is not a "sign of our times", as though it was a fulfillment of some aspect of prophecy, another clue to the exact Day of the Lord. Nehemiah wrote of what happens when God's people rested. ²⁸ *But after they had rest, they again did evil before You... Yet they acted ^lproudly, and did not heed Your commandments, but sinned against Your judgments, 'Which if a man does, he shall live by them.' And they shrugged their shoulders, ^lstiffened their necks, and would not hear*" (Neh. 9:28-29). All this befell them "after they had rest". Again, rest is good when deserved, when it is necessary, because of your labors. Farmers rise before the sun, labor till it sets low in the sky, then they rest to be ready for the next day of labor and I doubt there are too many, farmers who rest more than they work. So, when you see a man or a woman labeled "farmer", that ensign carries weight. Shouldn't the same be even all-the-more true for God's people?

We must not let the sign on the building become ornamental, meaningless, powerless by our resting too much from the work.

Jesus said, ³⁶ *But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for*



"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."

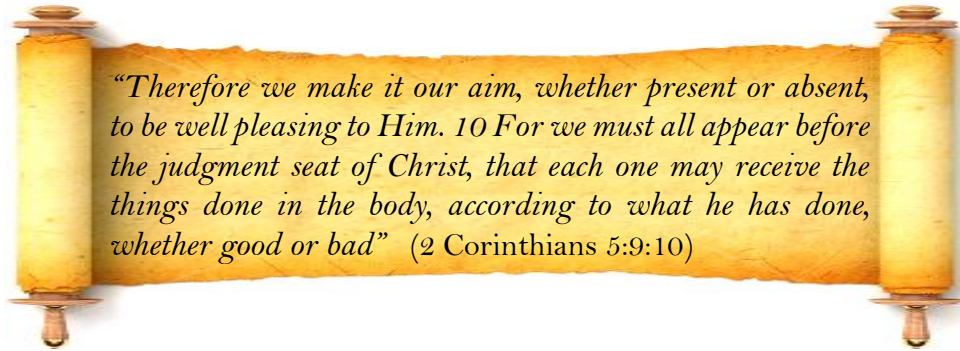
them, because they were ^lweary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest'" (Matt. 9:36-38). The enemy is working hard to make the sign on the building and the name we wear just embellishments, we must not help him in any way.

Let us remember the meaning and power behind the words "Church of Christ" on our building. It is the one and only true church built by Christ (Matt. 16:18), and has only one foundation, that cannot be moved (Luke 6:48; 1 Cor. 3:11). It always abides in the doctrine of Christ, accepts the scripture as God breathed, and the only source of authority for every member of the body (2 Tim. 3:16-17), It worships according to "Spirit and Truth" (John 4:23-24). All became members in exactly one way (John 14:6) through their obedience to the faith, being baptized into one body (1 Cor. 12:13) and added to the church by the Lord (Acts 2:47).

To this point in the history of God's people, even though He had shown them many signs and wonders that they might heed the signs and be saved, they did not. *"O Lord, are not Your eyes on the truth? You have stricken them, but they have not grieved; You have consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than rock; They have refused to return"* (Jer. 5:3). Today, there are still many who refuse correction.

Many congregations will fail because the sign on the building becomes powerless and ornamental through their own inactivity in the harvesting of souls. Let us make sure that the sign on the building properly describes the contents within so that when “...our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens” (2 Cor. 5:1).

In Love
David Scarpino



Times of Our Services	
Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

What Must I Do to Be Saved?	
1. Hear the gospel -----	John 6:45; Romans 10:17
2. Believe the gospel -----	John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
3. Repent of sins -----	Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
4. Confess Christ -----	Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized -----	Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
6. Remain faithful unto and until death -----	Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22

Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. (Hebrews 5:8-9) **“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”** (Isaiah 6:3)

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